

Message Text

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S E C R E T HONG KONG 1854

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: FPOR CH US
SUBJECT: CHIEF NCNA REPORTER IN HONG KONG COMMENTS ON SINO-
US RELATIONS

SUMMARY: IN A TWO-HOUR FEBRUARY 10 LUNCHEON CONVERSATION
WITH CONGEN OFFICERS, NCNA'S CHIEF REPORTER IN HONG KONG,
SZETO KUENG, STATED THAT HE PERSONALLY FELT COMMON LANGUAGE
COULD BE WORKED OUT TO "GET AROUND THE USE-OF-FORCE PROBLEM"
VIS-A-VIS TAIWAN. END SUMMARY.

1. SZETO KUENG RAISED QUESTION OF SINO-US RELATIONS BY
REFERRING TO AN ARTICLE BY C.W. CHOUDBURY IN THE JANUARY 31
ISSUE OF THE PRC-CONTROLLED WEN WEI PAO. CHOUDBURY, DIRECTOR
OF THE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES INSTITUTE OF CENTRAL UNIVERSITY
IN NORTH CAROLINA, HAD TAKEN PART IN 1969-70 PRC-PAKISTAN
TALKS AS A PAKISTANI OFFICIAL. ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE
WHICH WAS TRANSLATED FROM ORBIS, THE UNITED STATES WAS ONLY
USING THE US-TAIWAN SECURITY TREATY AS AN "EXCUSE " NOT TO
NORMALIZE RELATIONS. SZETO POINTEDLY REMARKED THAT THIS
MAY INDEED BE THE CASE. CONGEN OFFICER REPLIED THAT THE QUES-
TION OF TAIWAN WAS A COMPLICATED ONE, INVOLVING SERIOUS DOMES-
TIC POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ANY U.S. PRESIDENT.

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2. CONGEN OFFICER THEN MENTIONED THE JANUARY 11 PEOPLE'S DAILY
ARTICLE BY THE THEORETICAL STUDY GROUP OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS WHICH HAD BROACHED THE TAIWAN PROBLEM, STATING THAT ON
THE BILATERAL U.S.-PRC QUESTION ARISING FROM THE AMERICAN
PRESENCE ON TAIWAN, "THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS STOOD
FOR A SETTLEMENT THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT RESORTING TO
FORCE". SZETO REPLIED IN VERY DELIBERATE AND MEASURED WORDS

THAT, IN HIS "PERSONAL VIEW" SOME ACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE TO GET AROUND THE QUESTION OF THE USE OF FORCE ON TAIWAN COULD BE DRAWN UP BETWEEN U.S. AND CHINESE OFFICIALS, HE CITED THE EXAMPLE OF THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE-THE STATEMENT THAT CHINESE ON BOTH SIDES OF THE STRAITS RECOGNIZE THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE CHINA-AS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW SUCH STATEMENTS CAN BE WORKED OUT. HE ALSO SAID THAT CHINESE OFFICIALS WELCOME PRIVATE REASSURANCES LIKE THOSE MADE BY U.S. OFFICIALS ABOUT THE PACE OF NORMALIZATION IN THE PAST. NEVERTHELESS, SZETO NOTED THAT WHILE CHINA AND THE UNITED STATES SHARE SOME COMMON FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS, ESPECIALLY IN ASIA, THERE ALSO REMAIN FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES OF PRINCIPLE. HE POINTED TO COMMENTS BY THEN U.S. AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE YOUNG IN DECEMBER CONCERNING VIETNAM AND CHINESE EXPANSIONISM AS AN EXAMPLE. SUCH STATEMENTS, SZETO CLAIMED APPEAR TO BE SUBTLE BUT SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURES IN U.S. POLICY.

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